(d) The steps taken by the Government to curb circulation of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) in the country include stepping up of vigilance by the Border Security Force and Custom authorities to prevent smuggling of fake notes; dissemination of information on security features through print and electronic media and formation of Forged Note Vigilance Cells in all the Head Offices of the banks. Additional security features have also been incorporated in the bank notes in 2005 to make counterfeiting very difficult. To strengthen the security of bank notes further, incorporation of latest security features is underway. A High Level Committee headed by the Union Home Secretary comprising officials from central agencies and other senior police officials has been constituted to monitor and draw a comprehensive strategy to combat FICN. Similar bodies have also been set up in the States. In addition, Government of India have nominated the Central Bureau of Investigation as the Nodal Agency to monitor investigation of fake currency note cases. The RBI has also strengthened the mechanism for detection of counterfeit notes by the Banks.

Strike by employees of Air India

*154. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India's 30,000 employees have threatened to go on strike after they were told that their June salaries would be delayed whereas previously they were given bonuses continuously for three years even when airline was making losses;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the State-owned Air India (AI) has accumulated losses of Rs. 4,334 crore and taken an overdraft of more than Rs. 16,000 crore to meet its working capital expenses; and

(c) if so, whether he has so far reviewed the finances of AI and taken any decision for its survival?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No strike notice was issued by any Union. However, Unions resorted to other means of protest against the deferment of salaries.

(b) NACIL is estimated to incur a loss of Rs. 5000 crore in 2008-09 and as on date its working capital limits are Rs. 16000 crore.

(c) Yes, Sir. A comprehensive restructuring plan for Air India is under formulation.

Payment of dividend by profit earning banks

†*155. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Banks have earned profit during the financial year 2008-09;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.